

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE****A SURGICAL INSTRUMENT**

- 5 An electrosurgical instrument for use in cutting and/or coagulating tissue includes a dielectric material, the dielectric material being positioned in the current pathway between the tissue-treatment regions of first and second electrodes. This can be achieved by providing one or more electrode surfaces coated with a dielectric material having a reactive impedance of less than 3,000 ohms/sq. mm. at 450 kHz. The
- 10 dielectric coating acts to couple the RF signal into the tissue primarily by capacitive coupling, providing a more even heating of the tissue and the elimination of "hot spots". Examples of electrosurgical instruments employing such coated electrodes include forceps, scissors or scalpel blade instruments.